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MISS KATIE LEONARD.

MISS KATIE LEONARD, the subject of our portrait for this month, is a child pianist who was born in London in October of 1885. Her father was an Englishman, her mother is an Australian, and when a baby, Miss Leonard was removed to America, where her mother, herself an excellent musician, maintained her family by teaching music. It was by hearing these lessons that the youthful prodigy first imbibed her passion for music. At the early age of two years, we learn that she could already "pick out" the tunes which she had heard, and at the age of five, she evinced such remarkable aptitude that her mother could not remain blind to it, and, after a little tuition, she performed in public on several occasions. Having studied for a time under Mr. Fisk in Kansas City, she was brought to London about two years ago, and placed under the experienced direction of Mr. Francesco Berger, the well-known Professor, Composer, and Hon. Secretary of the Philharmonic Society. Under his auspices she has so developed her natural talent as to become a phenomenal pianist. Her first recital in December, 1893, was quickly followed by others given at Steinway Hall in April and June last, and by a notable concert in the Queen's Hall on December 5th. Her surprising execution, the unusual power of her left hand, the finish of her phrasing, the delicacy of her touch, and her exceptional memory, are remarkable. Among many prominent judges who vouch for her undeniable capability may be named: Sophie Menter, Sapellnikoff, Sir A. C. Mackenzie, Mr. J. A. Hopkins, Mr. S. Arthur Chappell, Signor Randegger, Mr. Vert, Mr. Daniel Mayer, Mme. Ella Russell, Mr. Iver M'Kay, Miss Amy Sherwin, Mr. Stanley Lucas, and Mr. W. H. Cummings. Whether in a Beethoven Concerto, a sonata, a Handel suite, a Mendelssohn *Rondo*, or in lighter pieces by more modern composers, her performances are equally astonishing. Katie Leonard has a great future before her.

CURRENT NOTES.

THE month of January is, perhaps, as barren of purely musical events as any month in the year. The pantomime season causes an intermission in the popular concerts at St. James's Hall, and in the Saturday concerts at the Crystal Palace. The latter will not be resumed until February 16th, and the former recommenced on Saturday and Monday, the 12th and 14th ult. Meanwhile amateurs had a good opportunity of hearing agreeable light music at the pantomimes—noticeably those of the Crystal Palace and the Lyceum Theatre—at the ballets presented by the Empire and Alhambra, and, above all, at Daly's Theatre, where *Hänsel und Gretel* formed a delicious musical treat.

Hänsel und Gretel, by Herr Humperdinck, suffered in some measure from the fact that it was produced at Christmas time. Dealing, as it did, with a children's fairy story, it was expected in some quarters to be a

kind of sublimated pantomime. This is much as though one were to resent the absence of "knock-about" artists in Wagner's *Siegfried*. All the composer set himself to do was to musically reproduce the atmosphere and emotions of an old German tale, wherein the supernatural obtrudes itself as a matter of course, and the miraculous powers of a child-eating witch are "granted," just as is the monstrosity which Wagner characterises as "The Worm" is granted. The musician illustrates what is postulated by the construction, and surely it is better to write worthy and intelligent strains to a childish theme than to write tiresome if pretentious music to a "grown-up" plot, which modern composers constantly do. *Hänsel und Gretel* is a thing of beauty from start to finish. The overture had been already heard twice at the London Symphony Concerts, and popular enthusiasm had been to some extent aroused. Yet nothing like the effect which the entire opera could not fail to produce upon the musical listener had been experienced in London for a long time. The subtle delineation of character, the way in which the composer identified himself with the feelings of the children (the principal characters), the warm, voluptuous instrumentation, were revelations in their different kinds.

Mlle. JEANNE DOUSTE, a talented pianist, whose name will be familiar to my readers, made her first appearance in public as a dramatic vocalist in the part of Gretel. This is not the place in which to do full justice to the charm of her acting, but it would be unfair to lose any opportunity of bearing witness to her admirable and bird-like singing. She certainly has achieved a reputation as a vocalist, and in the absence of more than the usual stupidity of *impressarii*, she ought to receive many engagements.

Bastien et Bastienne, which precedes *Hänsel und Gretel*, was composed by Mozart at the early age of twelve years, and must, thus, on its first performance in England, claim some attention from a musical periodical. But, sooth to say, the genius which it displays is not calculated to set the Thames or even the Spree on fire. Now-a-days, the reiteration of the libretto; the obvious closes; the perpetual coming to a full stop, and the starting afresh; the cheerful and irresponsible treatment of the subject matter—whether it be grave or gay—seem out of date and *rococo* to the last degree. With all, and more, of these blemishes *Bastien et Bastienne* positively teems. Nevertheless, the operetta cannot but be interesting since it was composed by Mozart, though any interest which may attach to it must be of the antiquarian order. It is only just, however, to remark that what Mozart did, pleasantly enough, at the age of twelve, was habitually done much worse in his time by musicians aged 42, and 52, for that matter.

ORDINARY people are very apt to minimise the important share of the musician in such evanescent displays as pantomimes. The exigencies of the press, with due regard to the well-earned holidays of printers, prevented my being able to allude last month to the valuable musical

work of Mr. Oscar Barrett in the pantomimes at the Crystal Palace and the Lyceum Theatres. It seems to be a vulgar error among managers that they have only to express a wish to their conductors, and that lengthy scenes of music will immediately be forthcoming. Anyone who has attended a pantomime rehearsal—not the comedy of that name, but the real thing—will understand what I mean. With all our so-called "musical advancement," it is not yet borne in upon stage managers that the invention, scoring, copying of the band parts, and their distribution in the orchestra, cannot possibly be the work of a moment, as seems to be expected. The composer of a pantomime has about three times the manual labour alone of the author, and he very seldom gets any credit. The producer, the lessee, the "principal boy"—who is a girl, thank God—the ballet master, the costumier, the machinist, the lime-light man, come in for the applause; and the poor musician at the desk, who has sat up all night, perhaps, in the country, correcting his band parts and writing fresh dances, is content that the performance was successful, and desires nothing more.

I was once present at a rehearsal of a drama to which incidental music had been written by the conductor of the band. At a certain point, the author observed: "Yes; but there should be a 'strong chord' there." "Certainly," assented the conductor, and, beckoning to his men, he gave the usual music-hall "strong chord." The author was furious. "That won't do!" he cried; "what I want is"—here he hummed a vague kind of tune. "Oh!" said the conductor, simply, "what you want me to do is to go home and score several bars of music for the orchestra!" This, though possibly an extreme case, only slightly exaggerates the attitude adopted by managers towards musicians, especially in pantomime. To my mind, there is nothing more touching in a provincial "show" than the patient figure of the conductor, who has in all probability been worried more than anybody else, and yet quietly supplies the public with what they may not appreciate, but the absence of which they would mightily resent.

SIMILARLY, the English public, i.e., the large general public, as opposed to musical folk, has but the vaguest notion of the importance of the music in a ballet. On the Continent, ballets are accorded a detailed criticism, just as we here accord it to an opera. And most justly. For the writing of the music to a ballet is often a more lengthy and taxing effort than the composition of a comic opera. Reviews of such ballets as *Ali Baba*, by M. Jacobi, at the Alhambra, which occupies nearly an hour, have no business to concern themselves only with the story, the *mise-en-scène*, the costumes, and the dancers. Yet that is what is constantly done, and quite recently I read a notice in a leading daily paper of Mr. Ernest Ford's *On Brighton Pier* at the Empire, in which nearly everybody concerned received a meed of praise except—well, whom do you think?—except the composer, who was not mentioned at all! Now I do not pretend that a poor musician can ever be so important as the man in the sealskin coat and varnished boots who is kind enough to take the money at the door of an American theatre, but I do think that Mr. Ernest Ford might have been entitled to a word of recognition side by side with the *perruquier* and the lime-light artist.

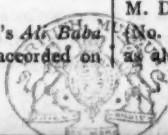
SCANT justice has been done to M. Jacobi's *Ali Baba* by the Press. To judge by the type he is accorded on

the programme, he is no more to be distinguished than Mr. Clarkson, the wig-maker, or the gentleman who is responsible for the "electrical effects." And yet M. Jacobi has simply, unostentatiously, uncomplainingly, and perfectly produced a prodigy of effectiveness—a musical triumph. Let any composer, I care not who, attempt to fill the Alhambra with sonorous if not symphonic music during the greater part of an hour, and he will tell you that the task is very considerable. To any but masters of orchestration the difficulties would be insurmountable. Nevertheless, one reads sickening puffs of crude drawing-room ballads with piano accompaniment (all wrong, of course) in papers which seem to imagine that the laborious and ingenious music of a ballet—however poor—writes itself!

It is impossible not to feel a certain bitterness when one contemplates these undeniable facts. The only moral that can be drawn is that music, which is practically, and as we know it, quite young as compared with the sister arts of painting and sculpture, which any fool can criticise—roughly—has at the present moment only a very limited hold on the minds of the majority. The "man in the street," even now, imagines that, having collected a "band," that band must play all right somehow. The "man in the street" does not reflect that this is much as though he were to expect a picture to paint itself, simply because a certain amount of colours had been distributed on a painter's palette. Meanwhile I recommend those of my readers who would like to combine sound, ingenious, and admirably played music with the pictorial charms of beautiful scenery, dresses, and grouping, a visit to *Ali Baba* at the Alhambra.

DR. C. J. FROST, Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, has been appointed head of the musical section of the Goldsmiths Company's Technical and Recreative Institute, New Cross, S.E. There is a large hall at this Institute, capable of accommodating 2,000 people, in which ballad concerts are to be given (on Saturday nights), and Students' concerts from time to time. The hall contains a four-manual organ with 62 stops, blown by electricity, upon which Dr. Frost gives recitals every Thursday, at 6.30.

At the Queen's Hall the London Symphony Concerts were resumed on January 17th, when the programme, while interesting enough, lacked any element of novelty. The management of these concerts has now passed into the hands of Messrs. Chappell & Co., and it is to be hoped that they will in future exercise a little more care in the preparation of their analytical programmes. Last month we pointed out some rather bad blemishes in the books of the Monday "Pops," and in the notice of Brahms's "Tragic" overture (which opened the Symphony Concert of the 17th ult.), the programme annotator seemed to be quite unaware of the existence of Mr. Fuller Maitland's "Masters of German Music." In this work Mr. Fuller Maitland, the admirable and impartial critic of the *Times*, devoted about one-third of his whole available space to a biographical and critical review of Brahms. So that it was absurd to say, as was said, that apart from Dr. Deiter and short notices in dictionaries, there is no biography of Brahms. The appearance of the French pianist, M. Diémer, was welcomed. He performed the *Concerto* (No. 4) of Saint-Saëns with much delicacy and dexterity, as also three solos. Otherwise the concert calls for no



especial remark, unless, perhaps, that the orchestral number advertised as "Siegfried's Journey to the Rhine," from *Götterdämmerung* (Wagner), was arranged by Herr Humperdinck, the composer of *Hänsel und Gretel*.

MR. BEN DAVIES and Miss Esther Palliser shone to conspicuous advantage as the Prince and Elsie, respectively, in the performance at the Albert Hall of Sir Arthur Sullivan's *The Golden Legend* on January 17th. These two artists are peculiarly fitted to fill these particular parts, and the effect that they produced was not the least important feature in a fine rendering ably directed by Sir Joseph Barnby.

SMETANA's string quartet, to which I alluded last month in somewhat enthusiastic terms, was repeated on January 19th at the Saturday "Pop." This was its third performance at the Popular Concerts within the space of some six weeks, and it is satisfactory to observe that the Director evidently shares my high opinion of this refreshing work, whatever his programme annotator may think. The executants (Lady Hallé, and Messrs. Ries, Gibson, and Ould) were the same as on the two previous occasions.

THERE is a certain and rather large class of people in London, who, without being conspicuously musical, love to hear what they call "good singing." For these the Ballad Concerts seem to be expressly designed. To this particular section of the public hardly any song comes amiss, provided it be warbled by a popular vocalist, and many votaries after hearing a new ditty sympathetically rendered, say by Mr. Maybrick or Madame Antoinette Sterling, will not rest until they have acquired the published version of the novelty. For myself, a ballad concert affords a too cloying fare. It is like a dinner consisting entirely of jam tarts, jellies, creams, and ices. In the nature of things, too, some of these delicacies are but ill prepared, and it has long been a marvel to me how prominent singers, trained, perhaps, at the Academy, can condescend, as they too often do, to give currency to the most utter trash. It is thus satisfactory to note that at the London Ballad Concert, given at the Queen's Hall on the last Saturday but one of last month, there was a solid backbone of sound music in the inclusion of no less than eleven pieces by Sir Arthur Sullivan. The Hall was crowded in every part, and it would be interesting to ascertain whether the audience had been attracted by the works of Sullivan, or merely by the fact that a ballad concert was in progress. It is to be hoped that the music of Sullivan, like that of Gounod—you cannot have an empty house if you advertise *Faust*—is really popular. It is an extraordinary achievement to be, like the two composers just named, the admiration alike of the musician and the vulgar.

LAST month I said in the first "Current Note" that Madame Patti would not appear again this season in London—meaning thereby at a concert. Since, however, it has been arranged for her to appear for at least six nights at the Covent Garden opera, it is probable that she may be heard at an operatic recital or two in addition. *La Traviata*, *Il Barbiere*, and *Don Giovanni* will be given in her honour for certain; possibly yet another opera in which her impersonation lingers ineffaceably. Meanwhile on the 18th ult., she created a perfect *furor* at the Berlin Philharmonic Hall, by a repetition of Elizabeth's "Prayer" from *Tannhäuser*, which she sang in December at the Albert Hall, Kensington.

THE stability of "Society clubs"—as distinguished from Bohemian clubs—into which ladies may be introduced, has never been of a very assured kind. Witness the collapse of the "New" Club whither the Prince of Wales at one time resorted several times a week, and the downfall of two successive "Lyric" clubs. The leading spirits of the "Hyde Park" Club, however, seem undeterred from trying the experiment afresh, and certainly their musical arrangements leave little to be desired. In the hands of Mr. Norfolk Megone, the tried conductor of the Strolling Players' Amateur Orchestral Society, the small but effectual band finds a thoroughly capable director. On Sunday, the 19th ult., the programme performed during dinner was very accurately rendered, and the second part, played in the drawing-room, was a musical treat by reason of its precision and the smart workman-like attack which the players showed. Just as used to be the case at the "New" Club—of which the "Hyde Park" would appear to be a kind of reincarnation—there is little or no attempt at applause, however gratified the audience may be. That would involve unnecessary effort, and perhaps interrupt a good story. But athwart the buzz of general conversation I—like the fly, with my little eye—could discern that the music deserved all the appreciation, which, if not ostentatiously manifested, it doubtless received.

I WAS much shocked to hear of the death of Mr. Edward Solomon at the very early age of 36. There can be no question as to his great musical powers, his facility and rapidity in composition being amazing. His first real success was in *Billie Taylor*, a comic opera, to which Mr. H. P. Stephens furnished the libretto, and which was produced at the Imperial Theatre in 1880. *Claude Duval*, *Lord Bateman*, *The Vicar of Bray*, *Paul and Virginia*, and *Pocahontas*, followed in rapid succession, and quite recently, his *Nautch Girl* enjoyed a long run at the Savoy Theatre. Mr. Solomon wrote hosts of songs, dances, &c., in addition to the music to Mr. Burnand's versions of *Pickwick* and *Domestic Economy*. He was at one time the conductor at the Royalty Theatre, where he wrote some charming music for burlesque, and he was as invaluable as popular in the production of the series of "Guards' Burlesques." His music possesses distinct and original characteristics of a very refined kind, and I can honestly say that nothing he wrote ever failed to give me pleasure.

A CONCERT in aid of the funds of the Invalid Children's Aid Association was given on the 22nd ult., at St. James's Hall, when so many prominent artists appeared that it is a matter of conjecture at what hour the proceedings terminated. Commencing at three o'clock, the concert was about half over at five, when I was obliged to retire from the scene. Madame Anna Lang played the violin very nicely, and the rich, creamy voice of Madame Gomez produced its usual captivating effect. The concert, in which Mr. David Bispham, Mr. Herbert Thorndike, Mrs. Hutchinson, Mr. Joseph O'Mara and others took part, was practically a ballad concert, some of the selections being of extreme silliness. Mrs. Hutchinson introduced two songs by Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Le Rosier*, and *Si tu m'aimais*, which proved very neat and acceptable in their old-fashioned way. Mr. Leo Stern, who plays the violoncello with much taste, was heard to better advantage in Popper's familiar *Le Papillon*, than in his own somewhat maudering and pretentious *Mélodie Romantique*. Once more attention is drawn to the absurd practice of engaging for a concert which is intended to last two hours enough artists for a four hours' programme.

P. R.

THE CONVENTIONAL IN MUSIC.

WHEN we speak of the conventional in music, we do not mean either mannerism on the one side or real badness on the other. While the former is purely individual, the conventional is a part of the artistic material of the time—the sort of writing that any capable contemporary musician is able to write himself. And on the other hand it is not the equivalent of real positive inferiority. It is rather, so to speak, a negative quality—an absence of the great touch, rather than a presence of the opposite. What we wish to show about it is, that it is an essential element in the work of all the great men, varying with each, but still always remaining as an evidence of the necessary imperfection of endeavour. But before doing so, there are what we might call conscious instances of its use that we must distinguish from its ordinary employment. Thus it may be used for purposes of humour, as in the broad and perhaps rather annoying joke at the end of the second movement of Beethoven's eighth symphony, or more strictly legitimately, in comedy opera, of which *Die Meistersinger* is the great type. And again it may find a place in settings of poems like those of Heine; as in Schumann's wonderful but often misconceived "Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen," where the desperate concealment of deep feeling which inspires the words receives an ideally Heinesque rendering in the sort of wild commonplace of the music.

It is easy enough to point out instances of the conventionalities in the great composers of the last century—such as the stereotyped figures and cadences of Handel, the regular turns of Bach, the "tonic and dominant" at the end of the various sections of the movements in Haydn and Mozart. But somehow they seem to serve to set off the greatness and beauty of the thoughts between, and we feel that it would be an anachronism if they were not there; it is only when, as in the average composers of the time, they set off nothing in particular that they really irritate us. Such formalisms seem to us, as we look back at them, as much a part of the beauty of the whole as the limitations of the heroic couplet do of the best English verse of the same period. Of course, the greater the man, the fewer they are; but even in the greatest they are still present—they are simply a part of the artistic life of the time. We can see the conventionalities of the age, more or less, and in varying forms of melody or harmony or structure, in Gluck, in Beethoven, in Weber, in Schubert, in Schumann; and if for a moment, simply because we are his contemporaries, we find them harder to see in Brahms, we need only look to the countless imitations of him, which often look on paper exactly similar—the same technical effects of cross-rhythm and all the rest—but are altogether without the incommunicable living touch which gives the forms all their beauty and greatness. The great men have accepted the artistic material of their time—they could not help doing so—but they have worked upon it, and bound it to the service of their own thoughts. In their turn, they, too, leave behind them a legacy which becomes the conventional property of the next generation; but it is nothing short of artistic suicide if we do nothing more than simply accept our inheritance. Not to mention other instances—we meet with them every day—we see from the work of a composer of such talent as Sterndale Bennett how impossible it is to frame a style for oneself out of the crumbs from the table of the great men.

But many people, who are perhaps unnecessarily ready to admit the formalisms and conventionalities which go to make up the material of the works of

earlier composers, draw the line at Wagner and his followers. Here, they say, commonplace has an end; we can trace the influence of the conventionality of the time in all others, but in Wagner there is nothing of the sort. And even if they throw over *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, they yet claim for the later works that there is nothing of the old leaven of formalism remaining. But still, if we look at their protestations in a calm judicial spirit, it must strike us as strange that all those flaws in the very nature of the material, with which the older composers had to bear, should be so suddenly eradicated—it is surely more natural to suppose that it is merely because the conventionalities of Wagner are the conventionalities of our own time and of ourselves, that they are, perhaps, harder to discover than those of Handel or Haydn. And if it is true, as we said, that the conventional in music is that which can easily be imitated, then a considerable amount of Wagner's music seems to come under the term, for there is no doubt whatever that any educated musician would not find much difficulty in composing a scene from an unpublished Wagner opera which would deceive 80 per cent. of a Richter concert audience, while it would be the easiest thing in the world to make an imitation of Liszt which would be safe from the detection of an even larger proportion. But the true Wagnerian will reply that this does not prove anything, because the great majority of people who talk about Wagner and listen to his music with rapture, really know very little about it—as is no doubt perfectly true. He will ask for definite instances of conventionalism, with chapter and verse, and we think that we can give him them.

Perhaps he would be prepared to throw over the earlier works, but we might at any rate point out in passing the duet in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, with its Rossini-like cadenza for the two voices, and a great deal of Daland's music, with its old-fashioned turns, or in *Tannhäuser* we might notice the structure of the melodies in the duet of Tannhäuser and Elisabeth, and in Wolfram's air towards the close of the first act, or again the sort of "padding" like that at the opening of the first act of *Lohengrin*. These are the conventionalities of the old school, but along with them we find the beginnings of the conventionalities of the new, as in the indefinite recitative-like passages in the introduction to the third act of *Tannhäuser*, or the introduction to Wolfram's "Abendstern" air. And we see a curious instance of the parting of the ways in the passage in the third act, where Tannhäuser calls to Venus, "Zu dir, Frau Venus, kehre ich wieder." The first eight bars of this are simply superb—to our mind one of Wagner's most wonderful conceptions, both in melody and harmony; then the phrase is partly repeated, which quite takes the edge off, and it closes with a cadence which is, under the circumstances, almost puerile. But, leaving these, let us look to the later works. No musician can now doubt for a second that *Tristan*, the *Ring*, the *Meistersinger*, and *Parsifal*, rank among the very greatest of the "everlasting possessions" of art; but still we can, we think, point to instances in them of a contemporary conventionalism exactly in the same sense as we use the term in speaking of Mozart. Let us take *Tristan*, perhaps on the whole the greatest. We yield to no one in whole-hearted admiration of the warmth and richness of its glorious melodies, and the unparalleled power and depth of its emotional expression; but if such passages as these (for convenience of reference we quote from Bülow's vocal score)—pages 13 (lines 4, 5), 23 (lines 2-4), 34 (lines 3-5), or in the second act, pages 93, 130, 172—if these are not, in their various ways, as

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much "padding" and formalism as we find in Mozart, we do not know what the words mean. Of course it will at once be said that the "dramatic exigencies of the situation" demand less interest in some places; this is obviously true, but it really agrees with our argument—namely, that in the material which the artist has to use there are inevitable roughnesses, like flaws in the sculptor's marble, which he cannot remove. They vary according to the time—with Mozart they show themselves in one way, with Wagner in another; to take merely a superficial instance, with the former in perpetual full closes, with the latter in their perpetual avoidance. We see what is the outcome of the conventionalities incident to Wagner's later work—which are not really in their essence in any way dependent upon the dramatic surroundings, but are inherent in the very nature of the style—when we look at Liszt's Symphonic Poems—*Tasso*, for example, with its aimless recitatives for wind-instruments, and smashing diminished sevenths to express passion—or the thousand and one imitations of Wagner's artistic leavings which we have always with us. While we learn to sift the gold from the dust in the older masters, we must not suppose that, because the dust in the later is perhaps harder to see at first, therefore there is nothing but gold. We must look at them all, as impartially as we can, on their individual merits; what comparative criticism demands most of all is the sense of historical proportion.

ERNEST WALKER.

VARIA.

LOOKING over a collection of programmes of pianoforte recitals, we are again struck with the remarkable want of variety which they display. We do not refer to want of variety in the composers; for our part we would have little or no objection if reciters confined themselves to the "sacred seven" of piano music—Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, Brahms. But it is the extraordinary sameness of the compositions performed that is so singular; one would think that piano literature was as limited as that of the violin or organ, instead of being immeasurably wider. When, for example, do we hear pure Bach at a recital—one of the splendid Suites or Toccatas, or some of the "forty-eight"? All we hear of him consists, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, of a painful derangement of an organ-fugue by Liszt or Tausig, or a brilliant edition of the Chromatic Fantasia. Leaving out Mozart, who unfortunately seems practically non-existent for nearly all piano reciters, why are we not given something else of Beethoven besides the C sharp minor, the Waldstein, the Appassionata? Why not the late A major or E major, or some other one of an earlier period, or some of the Variations besides the set of thirty-two, or the superb and absolutely unplayed Bagatelles? Even as regards the great mainstay of the reciter—Chopin—the selection is, on the whole, strangely limited. Some of his finest works, like the F minor Ballade, the Polonaise-Fantaisie, the B minor Sonata, the great Mazurkas, are very seldom heard at recitals; while the first and third Ballades, the stock Waltzes, Impromptus, and Nocturnes, turn up continually. The case of Schumann is quite as bad: the *Carneval* and *Fantasiestücke* we have always with us, but do we often hear the last *Novellette*, the

Intermezzi, the *Davidsbündler*, the *Humoreske*, or the F minor Sonata, with its incomparable slow movement? Schubert, outside the "Wanderer" Fantasia (by no means one of his most characteristic works on the whole) seems unknown, and the wonderful beauties hidden in the sonatas and smaller pieces are hardly ever brought to light; while Brahms is only known by a very few things, and the magnificent sonatas and many more works of the very first rank might as well be non-existent. The fact of the matter is that reciters, with a few honourable exceptions, are very like a flock of sheep on this question; they all play the same things without, we fear, in many cases, even taking into account the existence of equally fine, but less played works. Their creed seems to be effectiveness, from the sensational standpoint, at all costs, and they consequently look down in disdain upon music, however beautiful or great, that to the popular mind is technically simple. And, worst of all, even those who, as we know, personally dislike Liszt's music, seem to think it is necessary to wind up with some Liszt fireworks, which we are quite sure that the majority of their audiences, if they were frank with themselves, would much rather do without. It is to us one of the great mysteries of musical things why nearly all pianists waste so much time in training their fingers to do what, after all, are nothing more or less than moderately amusing acrobatic performances.

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THE fact that the birthdays of Handel and Mendelssohn both fall within the present month suggests some comparisons between the two oratorios which have by far the greatest popularity in this country. The *Messiah* and the *Elijah* are the sacred works of the British amateur, and are to him beyond the range of even appreciative criticism. But still it cannot be too clearly recognised that the popular judgment in artistic questions is of absolutely no value in itself; if we were to make our artistic, as apparently we are supposed to make our political opinions, by counting of votes, there is no doubt that the latest music-hall song, or possibly "Home, sweet home," would beat everything else—and if we shrink from this conclusion, we can do nothing but acknowledge that popularity, *per se*, is no test of art. And really a comparison between the *Messiah* and the *Elijah* is, in many ways, very interesting. The *Messiah* somehow seems to us the artistic incarnation of the eighteenth century in one of its best aspects—thoroughly sincere and strong, entirely free from any touch of weakness or affectation, fettered by all sorts of formalisms, narrow in range of expression, and, on the whole, unimaginative, but often rising to real grandeur and nobility of a kind of stern Roman pattern—in many ways an extremely fine type, and one that, *mutatis mutandis*, we might well copy now-a-days. The *Elijah*, on the other hand, is a sort of epitome of a very prevalent and popular phase of religious feeling in the present century. It would be hard to deny that, taking it as a whole, its dominant note is weakness, as that of the *Messiah* is strength. It emphasises the comforting side of things, and the comfort it brings is not so much a noble resignation as a sentimental passivity. No doubt there are cases where the music braces itself up, as in the magnificent "Thanks be to God;" but when it tries to repeat the effort a little later, it only results in the rather commonplace march of "Be not afraid." Of course the later religious expression has notes which Handel lacked—a strongly personal feeling first of all, the modern romantic touch (as in the scene on Horeb), and perhaps we might say a certain tenderness, though the tenderness of

the *Elijah* is very different from that of a work like the *Deutsches Requiem*. Speaking for ourselves, we can never hear the *Elijah*, or still more *St. Paul*, without regretting that Mendelssohn did not see his limitations, and devote himself to the production of other perfect masterpieces like the *Hebrides Overture*, where he can take his place among the great composers unchallenged. It is really not very easy to find any salient points of contact between the *Messiah* and the *Elijah*. We may turn to the melodies of the two works, as the amateur understands the term; but there is no similarity of feeling between "I know that my Redeemer liveth" and "If with all your hearts"—the one is a thoroughly strong tune, the other is merely sentimental. No doubt the *Messiah* is of the two works the fuller of those formalisms and conventionalities which are incidents, more or less, of the material of every composer; but still things like "Why do the nations" do not deceive or annoy anyone—they are so obviously scale exercises and nothing more—while the more subtle conventionalisms of "It is enough" or "Lift thine eyes" either do deceive us into thinking them really religious music, in which case there is of course nothing more to be said, or else simply fill us with a feeling of irritation. Perhaps we may seem to have borne too hardly on Mendelssohn's work, but this was not our intention; no one could admire some of his writings more than we do, nor would we for a moment deny the great refinement and picturesqueness of much of the *Elijah* itself. It is merely the mixture of the religious and sentimental elements that we object to—the attempting of great themes in an emotionally weak spirit. It is as if we were passing into another world when we turn from "O rest in the Lord" to the Hallelujah Chorus.

ANOTHER composer whose birthday also falls within this month is Rossini. Now that we are in the full tide of reaction from the old days of Italian opera, when *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Fidelio* were spoken of in the same breath, and singers were solemnly judged according to their capacity or incapacity for roulades and cadenzas, there is perhaps a little danger of under-estimating the real talent, albeit of a second-rate species, that Rossini possessed. Making all allowance for his hopeless vulgarity in the deeper branches of his art, we can still recognise the charm of the opening of the *William Tell Overture*, of much of the same opera and of the *Barbiere*, and the *élan* and the spirit of his melodies, however deficient they are in the deeper qualities. If we look at the *Stabat Mater* as a collection of ballet-music (as some of it, it is said, was originally intended to be, the words having been fitted afterwards), it possesses really considerable attractions: as a setting of one of the greatest religious poems of the world, it is of course beyond all words—the English language contains no terms of sufficient vigour. Still, we need not follow Berlioz in his wild desire that all Rossini's music and all his admirers, too, might be solemnly burned together; he was musically far superior to Bellini and Donizetti and the Verdi of *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata*, and, after all, things like the *Gazza Ladra* and *Semiramide* overtures are sparkling and agreeable enough in their way. Of course, as music, they have none of the artistic qualities which make a good Lanner or Strauss waltz one of the most thoroughly enjoyable things in the world; but still they have their place in light art, and give no one any trouble to listen to—which is after all something.

E. W.

MUSIC IN COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS.

*** In view of the musical influence of Colleges and Public and High Schools, we shall be glad to receive communications respecting any musical events that may take place. Such notices, however, should reach us by the 18th day of the month.

DOINGS IN THE PROVINCES.

*** To obviate any interesting event in the Suburbs or Provinces escaping attention, we shall be glad to receive communications from local correspondents. These, however, must reach us before the 18th day of the month.

LIVERPOOL.—The Carl Rosa Company commenced their annual season of two months opera at the Royal Court theatre on Monday, December 31st, 1894. It is evidently the manifest intention of the management to uphold the reputation which this company holds, and they are to be congratulated on their enterprise for their production of new works and the revival of standard classics, which are too often neglected. Already Hamish McCunn's *Jeannie Deans* and, for the first time in England, Herr Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*, and Mozart's one-act opera, *Bastien and Bastienne*, have been given, besides which several other works, new to the Liverpool public, are promised. The list also includes, among others, the following, which either are to be or have already been given:—*Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, *Der Freischütz*, *Martha*, Goring Thomas's *Esmeralda*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*. *Hänsel und Gretel* created a very favourable impression on the initial performance, and it grows on a second hearing. The score contains some charming numbers, and there is a decided freshness both in the music and in the action and setting, which is distinctly pleasing.—For the sixth concert of the Philharmonic Society on December 18th, Handel's *Judas Maccabæus* was presented. The chorus and orchestra, under Sir Chas. Hallé, did ample justice to their portion of the work, and the solos were as might be expected from such capable artists as Mlle. Trebelli, Miss Clara Butt, Messrs. Edward Lloyd and Andrew Black.—The seventh concert of the series was given on January 8th. Sir Charles Hallé was solo pianist and Mlle. Landi the vocalist. The orchestra gave Mackenzie's "Britannia" overture—a bright and optimistic work, in which fragments of two national airs are made use of—the symphonic poem, "Vysehrad," by Smétana, and march from "Scènes Pittoresques," Massenet. Sir Chas. Hallé's numbers were Grieg's Piano-forte Concerto in A minor (Op. 16) and a Liszt Rhapsodie (with orchestra). Mlle. Landi sang an air from Gluck's *Paris et Hélène* and "Printemps qui commence," from Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila*. The lady sang with taste, and was favourably received.—On January 19th, Mr. Thomas Shaw gave the first of the second half of his season's concerts. He secured the assistance of esteemed artists, including Miss Mary Linck (Carl Rosa Company) and Mr. Dan Billington, an old favourite, who contributed no small share of the enjoyment of his patrons.—The Sunday Society's concert on Sunday, January 20th, was a "Wagner" event, the programme including the *Tannhäuser* overture, a selection from *Lohengrin*, and other works of the *maestro*, and vocal selections by Miss Minnie Hunt and Mr. Alec Marsh (Carl Rosa Company). This Society, which has done so much in giving the people national, intellectual, and instructive Sunday entertainments, maintained its reputation, everything being of a first-class order.

GLASGOW have been concerts audience perform but may surfeit of "Time, difference On the needs no a careful Miss An these p one of experien to the under I Orchest precede as to t render; that G disappo and Mr. pathetic Fillung follow, soon sh Verdi's ago, wh of the Mr. Ive seemed chorus work (a appreci concert that the Union The Ca finished forman Associa good ac songs— laneous wisely craze is Wedne audienc forman London is just p explan accepta

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GLASGOW.—Since the new year the Scottish Orchestra have been giving their usual Tuesday and Saturday concerts to, I am sorry to say, very discouragingly small audiences. This cannot be owing to the quality of the performances, which have been excellent throughout, but may be partly accounted for as a reaction from the surfeit of last season. Let us hope that by another season "Time, the Healer," will have smoothed over any differences, and we may look for better financial results.—On the 22nd we had a feast of Wagner. This concert needs no comment, as Wagner's works are always sure of a careful and vigorous interpretation from Mr. Henschel. Miss Amelia Holding (who may be said to be a native of these parts) made another very favourable impression at one of the Saturday concerts. With a little more experience we have no doubt she will ere long come well to the front.—On Tuesday, the 15th, the Choral Union, under Mr. Bradley, with the assistance of the Scottish Orchestra, gave a grand performance of Verdi's *Requiem*, preceded by Gounod's *Gallia*. We were a little dubious as to the 250 voices of the Choral Union being able to render justice to the different degrees of light and shade that Gounod's work demands, and were very agreeably disappointed; at no time was there a tendency to shouting, and Mr. Bradley is to be congratulated on the very sympathetic and intelligent rendering the work received. Miss Fillunger, who had the heavy work of the *Requiem* to follow, was evidently at first reserving her strength, but soon showed herself well able to interpret Gounod. Verdi's *Requiem*, which was performed here a few years ago, when Mr. Santley sang in it, formed the other part of the concert, with Miss Fillunger, Miss Emily Squire, Mr. Iver McKay, and Mr. Dan. Price as soloists. They seemed perfectly conversant with their parts, and the chorus sang splendidly, overcoming the difficulties of the work (and there are many) with considerable ease and due appreciation of its many beauties. Altogether it was a concert to be remembered, and the only drawback was that the audience *ought* to have been larger. The Choral Union repeat the *Messiah* next week at popular prices.—The Caledonian Road U.P. Church Musical Association finished the first half of their session with a fine performance of the *Erl King's Daughter*.—Bushy Musical Association, a young society under Mr. Gardiner, gave a good account of some of Handel's choruses and some part songs.—Thornliebank Musical Association gave a miscellaneous concert, which was well attended, when they wisely dispensed with the orchestra.—The Paderewski craze is still strong with us. That artist gave a recital on Wednesday evening, in St. Andrew's Hall, to a crowded audience. It is too late in the day to criticise his performances; still, if the young German who appeared in London the other day fulfils all that is expected of him, it is just possible in a short time that, in spite of Mr. Mayer's explanation, a five shillings stall audience may be very acceptable. The public is a very fickle master to serve.

OUR Newcastle-on-Tyne correspondent writes:—It will be many years since there was such a deadlock in musical matters at this season of the year as has characterised the Christmas and New Year of 1894-5 in Newcastle. Even the evergreen *Messiah* has not been forthcoming. Except at the Elswick Road Wesleyan Chapel, where there was a good performance, under the direction of Mr. Geo. Dodds, organist, and at the Central Hall, by the Central Hall Choir, under the conductorship of Mr. Robt. Sarlsby, we have not heard of any. Such a state of

affairs does not speak well for such an important, and presumably wealthy city as Newcastle. The available halls have been taken up with wax-work shows, performing elephants, lions, tigers, &c., relieved with nigger entertainments, and intermittent Saturday Pops, which however have only come in few and far between. Is it because the public have been so educated into getting their music for nothing, with all the excitement of dressing for the show in response to the long looked for "invitation" thrown in, that *entrepreneurs* are afraid to speculate? Next month, there is promise of a goodly crop of "invitations" with one of private enterprise, for which the audience have to pay. It is not necessary to predict which will have the better audience.

Mr. Connell Wood, a local teacher of singing, gave an invitation concert in the new Assembly Rooms a few nights ago. His pupils acquitted themselves very well to the satisfaction of the fashionable audience present.

Mr. J. Murray, a local professor of long and honourable standing, was, early on New Year's Day, made the recipient of a pleasing gift in the shape of an address and purse of gold, being, in the words of the address accompanying the gift, "an expression of regard and sympathy" from the choristers and a few intimate friends on his severing his connection with Jesmond Parish Church, of which he was until recently organist and choir-master. During the past 24 years Mr. Murray has only held three appointments, each being a step higher, and during that time he has never missed a service or practice except during legitimate holidays or through sickness. The positions he held were Tynemouth Congregational Church, 3½ years; St. James's Church, Newcastle, 16 years; and Jesmond Parish Church, nearly 5 years. On the 30th December, Mr. Murray gave an Organ Recital in St. James's Church, Newton Hall, the following being his programme:—Flute Concerto—Rink; *Nazareth*—Gounod; Larghetto from Symphony in D—Beethoven; *Ave Maria* (Battiste)—Dr. Spark; Allegretto Pastorale (Capucine)—Kullak; *O Sanctissima*—Chipp.

NEWINGTON.—A performance of *Elijah* has been recently given at St. Mary's, Newington, by the Newington Choral Society and the church choir, under the direction of Dr. Jacob Bradford. The soloists were Master Sterndale Bennett, and Messrs. P. J. Bradford, F. W. Cheeseman, and Frank Swinford. Prof. Vernham presided at the organ.

FOLKESTONE.—On Sunday afternoon, January 6th, at St. Michael's Church, the Rev. E. Husband gave, together with a musical programme, rendered for the most part by himself, an interesting address, entitled, "Is Secular Music Sacred?" in which, by means of examples of bad music of the type usually called sacred, and good music of that usually called secular, he strove to show that the terms sacred and secular music have only a real meaning when used synonymously for good and bad. "All good music is sacred, be it in church or on the stage; and all poor music is execrably unsacred."

BIRSTALL, YORKSHIRE.—On Sunday, December 23rd, choir services were held at the Wesleyan Chapel, when the programmes included, in the morning, anthems, "O come, let us worship" (C. G. Allen), "How bright those glorious spirits shine" (Arthur Page), Quartet, "God is a Spirit" (Sterndale Bennett), "Cantate Domino" (Bridge-water); and, in the evening, Gounod's anthem, "The

peace of God"; "Comfort ye," "Every valley," "And the glory of the Lord," from *The Messiah*; solo and chorus, "Sweet is Thy mercy" (Barnby); duet and chorus, "The day is past and over" (C. J. Marks). The soloists were Miss Pyrah, Miss R. Allen, and Mr. W. D. Allott.

SOME FOREIGN ITEMS.

MADAME BERTHE MARX-GOLDSCHMIDT and Señor Sarasate have arranged to give, during the months of February and March, twelve concerts in the Erard Hall in Paris. Eight of them will be Pianoforte Recitals of Madame Marx-Goldschmidt, and four of them Quartets with Señor Sarasate as leader.

BERLIOZ's wonderful but most unequal Dramatic Symphony, *Romeo et Juliette*—in which work of the greatest beauty and originality is found along with much that is tedious and sometimes almost ludicrous in its word-painting—has recently been given at Vienna for the first time in its entirety.

It is proposed to erect a monument to Liszt at Weimar, as the town with which the great pianist was most intimately connected; and a committee has been formed in order to procure subscriptions for that purpose.

A MOZART SOCIETY has been started in Berlin, the objects of which are not only to support in all ways the Mozarteum at Salzburg, the composer's birthplace, but also, more generally, to promote the highest artistic standards in musical matters at large.

THE operas of Massenet are beginning to be frequently performed at various continental theatres. News comes of performances of *Manon* and *La Navarraise* at Brussels (where the latter was particularly successful), as well as of the former work and *Werther* at the International Lyric Theatre at Milan.

LEONCAVALLO has, it is said, arranged and composed the music for a ballet founded on Goethe's "Reinecke Fuchs," which will be shortly brought out at Vienna. His "Medici" has been recently produced at Prague with the greatest success.

DURING the International Exhibition of 1900 at Paris it is said that a cycle of Wagner's works will be given in German. In the meantime, arrangements are being made for separate performances of all the later works at the Opéra, with, of course, the exception of *Parsifal*.

REVIEWS.

Chapters on Church Music. By the Rev. R. B. Daniel (Elliot Stock).

THIS interesting and exhaustive book deals with all the details of church music and choir management in a style which is vigorous and enthusiastic, though occasionally rather rhetorical. It is divided into four parts, treating respectively of the music in church services, of the organist and the organ, of the choir, and of the musical discipline and authority in churches. A considerable portion of the book is taken up with matter that trenches more or less on theological controversies, and is consequently outside the scope of a purely artistic review; but no musician can refuse his most hearty assent to the remarks about the necessity for a return to the older, stronger style of church music. We have rarely met with more welcome writing on this subject than is to be found in the first chapter of this book, with its enthusiastic eulogies of the

great German *choräle*, of the equally fine English and Scotch tunes of Day's and Ravenscroft's Psalters and similar sixteenth and seventeenth century collections, and of the less strong but thoroughly healthy, as well as beautiful, tunes of the last century. As Mr. Daniel well says, it is painful to think of some of the hymn-tunes that are popular in our churches now, when we remember the immense number of these splendid old melodies, the great majority of which are practically unknown. The real fact is, no doubt, that to most people a well-known tune has emotional and traditional associations which are quite distinct from any consideration of its musical merit; and they resent in the strongest way any attempt to place better tunes to the familiar words. This is the great difficulty which has to be faced by reformers who would make a clean sweep of all the mass of mingled sickness and vulgarity which has invaded our hymn-books; and no doubt, as the question is after all hardly a purely artistic one, some compromise is more or less inevitable. Still, there is not the least doubt that our hymn-tunes might be infinitely better than they are, without hurting anybody's feelings. A beginning might, at any rate, be made with hymns, the words of which have no traditional bad tune attached to them; and as regards anthems and the choral settings of the canticles and communion service, there is no possible reason why the tawdry modern productions so painfully prevalent should continue to exist for a day—there is no tradition attaching to these but the tradition that music, which no musician worthy of the name would tolerate anywhere else, is quite good enough for the church. There are other questions in this book, for example, those of the "cathedral service," the westward position of the organ, and others, about which we may still have our doubts; but if there was nothing else good in the book besides the first chapter—which is very far from being the case—we should still give it a warm recommendation.

Musicians and their Compositions. By J. R. Griffiths (S. W. Partridge & Co.).

THIS is a small illustrated book, containing short sketches of Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Mendelssohn. It is popular and elementary in tone, and contains most of the old stock anecdotes about the composers concerned, with but rare and hesitating excursions into anything like critical biography. Still, in a book of this kind, it is refreshing to find denials of the so-called "Moonlight Sonata" story, and of the authenticity of the "Twelfth Mass," and also to come across the statement that Mendelssohn's extreme admirers have been led by the fascination of his personality to over-estimate his genius as a composer. One would not turn to this book for information on critical or technical points; but the biographies are bright and interesting, and the reader of them may be led on by their means to more serious studies.

E. W.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters connected with the literary department of this Journal must be addressed to the EDITOR, 44, Great Marlborough Street, W.

Communications intended for insertion will receive no notice unless accompanied by the name and address of the sender.

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XXII. 12. 14. 20.

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Bless.ed are they that do his com. mandments

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Bless.ed are they that do his com. mandments

W. 1969.

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right to the tree, the tree of life

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that they may have right to the tree, the tree of life

that they may have right to the tree, the tree of life

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BASS SOLO.

3

He that o-ver com-eth

shall in-her-it all things; and I, and I will be his God, and he shall be my

son, He that o-ver com-eth shall in-her-it all things; and

I, and I will be his God, and he shall be, shall be my

son.

And be - hold I come quick - ly I come
And be - hold I come quick - ly I come
And be - hold I come quick - ly I come
And be - hold I come quick - ly I come

quick - ly and my re - ward is with me and my re -
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quick - ly and my re - ward is with me and my re -
quick - ly and my re - ward is with me and my re -

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SOPRANO SOLO.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there

shall be no more death, neither sor - row, nor cry - ing, nei - ther shall there

be a - ny more pain, a - ny more pain, for the form - er things are

passed a - way, are passed, are pass'd a - way. God shall wipe a - way all

tears from their eyes all tears from their

eyes.

all the

He which tes - ti - fi - eth these things saith

He which tes - ti - fi - eth these things saith

He which tes - ti - fi - eth these things saith sure - ly I come quick - ly

He which tes - ti - fi - eth these things saith sure - ly I come quick - ly

are

sure - ly I come quickly He which tes - ti - fi - eth these things saith

all

sure - ly I come quickly He which tes - ti - fi - eth these things saith sure - ly I

He which tes - ti - fi - eth these things saith sure - ly I come

He which tes - ti - fi - eth these things saith sure - ly I come I come

their

sure - ly I come quick - ly A - - men, A - - men,

come I come quick - ly A - - men, A - - men, A -

quick - ly A - - men, A - - men, A -

quick - ly A - - men, A - - men, A -

P & W. 1968.

A - men E - ven so come, e - ven
 men E - ven so come, e - ven
 men A - - men E - ven so come, e - ven
 men A - - - men E - ven so come, e - ven

so come, e - ven so come, Lord Je - - sus, Lord Je - -
 so come, e - ven so come, Lord Je - - sus, Lord Je - -
 so come, e - ven so come, Lord Je - - sus, Lord Je - -
 so come, e - ven so come, Lord Je - - sus, Lord Je - -

- sus. A - - men A - - men.
 - sus. A - - men A - - men.
 - sus. A - - men A - - men.
 - sus. A - - men A - - men.

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